

"G.U.B.I."

Text: Proverbs 15:3, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

For many years the name of Scotland Yard was synonymous with crime detection and the apprehension of criminals. Back in 1908 a ~~department~~ ^{Bureau} of Investigation was started in our country. In 1935 it became the famous Federal ~~Bureau~~ Bureau of Investigation that is equally famous throughout the world. But long before either of these organizations ever came into being, God had his Universal Bureau of Investigation in operation. I am sure that almost all of us have been told at one time or another that God is everywhere and that He sees all that we do and all that we say.

A mother whose little boy was extremely bad one day, was at ~~the end~~ ^{the} of her wits end, and finally had reached the point where she felt she had to do or say something to make him behave, blurted out to him, "You better start behaving, because you know that God is watching you and He sees every-
^{hears} thing that you do and ~~xx~~ everything that you say." He answered, "Is that all He has to do all day, lay on his stomach up there and watch me?"

Perhaps this is what many others conjure up in their minds when they think about the possibility of God being all-seeing and all-knowing. For our Scripture this morning we read of the fall of Jericho and how the Israelites took the city and all that was in it. But before the battle took place they were warned by Joshua not to take any ~~xx~~ of the riches of the city for they were to be consecrated to the Lord.

~~xxxx~~ Everything was to be burned, except those things that would not burn, and these things were the gold, and silver, the vessels of bronze and brass and iron. These were to be consecrated to the Lord and placed in His treasury. All Israel had to obey these rules, but we read in the 7th chapter that a man of the tribe of Judah named Achan, felt that he could disobey these rules and not be found out. Everything started out so innocently. The battle for Jericho had been ended and all of the city had been burned, and all of the things of value had been taken for

~~for~~ the Lord. Now Israel could recuperate from her battles and enjoy a measure of prosperity, resting in the assurance they had acted in accordance with God's will. ~~But XXXXX, unbeknown to the rest of Israel, while they prepared to march on the way, the situation concerning the city of Ai, the Lord was angry with them~~ Joshua sent men from Jericho to spy out the land of Ai, and when they returned, they informed Joshua that all of the army would not be needed to conquer this town. So they sent 3000 men into battle against the army of Ai, and the men of Ai attacked them killing 36 of the Israelites. But unbeknown to Joshua and the Israelites this came about because God had withdrawn His favor and was ^{some} angered because Achan had stolen of the things that should have been placed in the treasury of the Lord.

This defeat disturbed Joshua so much that ~~he~~ we read (vs 6) And Joshua cried out to God and said, (vss 7-9) So God told Joshua what must be done (vss 10-15).

Now Achan the guilty party had taken a beautiful coat styled after the Babylonian garments. He had probably reasoned to himself, "Why let this beautiful coat to be burned. It seems like such a waste. The owner is dead, and no one knows it is here, it would be a shame to destroy it." And next to it he found silver worth 200 shekels and a wedge of gold worth fifty shekels. "Why give them to the Lord when his treasury is already full," he probably asked himself. And so he took them and wrapping the silver and gold in the coat, he dug a hole under the rug in his tent and buried them there for safe keeping.

Now Joshua had his instructions from God and he issued the call to have the people assembled the following morning. If we put ourselves in Achan's shoes for a few moments we can ~~probably~~ perhaps try to see the situation through his eyes as it were. He along with all of the rest of the Israelites had heard that someone in the camp had sinned grievously against the Lord. He had also heard that the person was to be exposed the next day. His mind must have pondered the ~~is~~ question as to whether he should go and

The more confess or not. ~~xx~~ he thought about it the more he must have convinced himself that someone else must have done something far worse than he. After all he had only taken a worthless garment, to be destroyed anyhow. No one knew of this except the members of his immediate family and they had not told anyone. It just had to be someone else. Probably the night seemed to never end for Achan, but ~~xx~~ at last the dawn came and the camp began to stir. Preparations were being made to hold the great assembly, and people were moving to and ~~from~~ fro. But Still Achan was uneasy, "What if someone had told on him," he probably reasoned. And while his private thoughts troubled him the trumpet sounded long and loud. People hurried to the central area of their encampment. Quickly he surveyed the situation and then he must have breathed a sigh of relief, for there were over 600,000 people here. How could one individual be singled out from this crowd? With this inward reassurance Achan walked toward the crowd, and took his place among the tribe of Judah.

But it was at this time that God's Universal Bureau of Investigation went to work. First the tribe of Judah was singled out as the tribe in which the guilty party ~~was~~ was a member. That was strange and perhaps Achan's family drew closer to his side, and looked at him with looks of fear. But Achan could very easily have reassured them by saying, "So what, that doesn't mean anything. After all, there are 76,000 people in the tribe of Judah. Can't you see the impossible task Joshua has in finding us in such a large multitude? Relax, play it cool!

But even as Achan was trying to reassure his family the trumpet sounded again, and Joshua called out the family of Zerah as containing the culprit. "The family of Zerah?" Achan must have asked himself, and his own heart must have begun to beat faster. Why that was ~~his~~ his great-grandfather. ~~He~~ himself was one of the family of Zerah. He must have very quickly looked over the faces of his uncles and aunts, his cousins, to see if he could detect there a guilty face. He must have been thinking that one of them had really done something terrible, and why didn't he or she confess it?

Again the trumpet sounded, and Joshua called out the family name of Zabdi. Why this was his own grandfather, Achan must have thought. All eyes turned towards his immediate relatives. Surely someone must step forward and confess. The little bit Achan had taken was not troubling him, God wasn't worried over the few little trophies he had, one of his relatives had done something terrible, -but who could it be?

He glanced up and ~~xxx~~ saw Joshua staring intently at him. Should he go forward and confess? No, he couldn't do that. What would people think of him?

Again the trumpet sounded, and Joshua called out the family of Carmi. His father's family. His own brothers and sisters and their families. Achan was probably now terrified. And at last the dreaded moment arrived and ~~he was called forward~~ his name was called and he found himself standing by himself facing Joshua.

And Joshua said to him (vs 19). So we read that Achan confessed, and once again the G.U.B.I. had done its work. GOD'S Universal Bureau of Investigation had gotten the right man.

We read in Proverbs 15:3, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." We know from this that God is all seeing and all knowing. We may think that we can do things and not be found out, but we are only kidding ourselves. Adam and Eve did this and this is the reason we have sin in the world! King David plotted to have Uriah killed so he could have Uriah's wife, and God found him out. Jonah sought to go against what God wanted him to do and God found him out. Ananias and Sapphira lied about a piece of property and were found out much like ~~xxxx~~ Achan was. In all of these instances we can see the G.U.B.I. at work. Moses cautioned the Israelites that if they did not do as the Lord commanded they were sinning, and he says in Numbers 32:23, "Be sure your sin will find you out." In Revelation 20:12 we read, "And the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works."

Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his
footstool for He is Holy.

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST SEPTEMBER 22, 1974
REV. RALPH C. LINK, PASTOR
MRS. MARILYN STEPHENSON, ORGANIST
MR. RALPH COOPER, CHOIR DIRECTOR
PAM FRY, MARY DELLEN - ACOLYTES

ORDER OF WORSHIP 11:00 A.M.
PRELUDE MUSIC: "How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings" LITTLE
"Lyle" RICHOLSON

SILENT PRAYER

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN No. 30 "COME, WE WHO LOVE THE LORD"
*ASCRPTION - CHORAL AMEN

*EXHORTATION

*CONFESSION (IN UNISON) "Most Holy God, who does search
and purify the hearts of men; grant us to know ourselves
as we truly are; open to us the condition of our souls;
give us penitence and forgiveness for our sins, enable
us with steadfast resolution to amend our lives; deliver
us from the captivity of false thoughts and evil habits,
that with unity of mind and peace of conscience we may
have our full reconciliation with you, and be of the
blessed company of all your faithful people; through
Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN."

*KYRIE (CHOIR, CONGREGATION AND PASTOR)

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON - CHORAL AMEN

*PRAISE

*PASTOR: O LORD OPEN OUR LIPS.

*PEOPLE: AND OUR MOUTH SHALL SHOW FORTH THY PRAISE

*DOXOLOGY No. 551

SCRIPTURE LESSON: JOSHUA 6: 1-24

HYMN No. 304 "THE KING OF LOVE MY SHEPHERD IS"

*AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH (APOSTLES' CREED)

*GLORIA PATRI

*CALL TO PRAYER

*PASTOR: THE LORD BE WITH YOU.

*PEOPLE: AND WITH THY SPIRIT.

*PASTOR: LET US PRAY.

*PRAYER AND PRAYER RESPONSE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY: "MEDITATION" STICKLES
ANTHEM: "HEAR OUR PRAYER" (WITH SAX OBLIGATO)
BY RUBENSTEIN

SERMON: "G.U.B.I."

PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

*HYMN OF DEDICATION No. 226 "DEAR LORD AND FATHER"

*BENEDICTION AND THREE FOLD AMEN

ORGAN POSTLUDE: "MAESTOSO" DOIGE

----- *CONGREGATION STANDING -----

THE LOVELY FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR HAVE BEEN PLACED BY

MRS. H. F. SANDOACH IN MEMORY OF "MOTHER" - MRS.

E. M. PERRIN.

SERVING AS USHERS TODAY ARE: *RAYMOND COVERT,

ROBERT DELLEN, BRIAN PFABE, STEVE SMITH, CHRIS PFABE.

SERVING IN NURSERY TODAY DURING MORNING WORSHIP -

MRS. LINNA McMILLIN, MRS. JANE ARMSTRONG, ELIZADETH

ARMSTRONG.

THE ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY WAS 256.

DEACON AND MRS. ALVIN TAIT WILL REPRESENT COUNCIL

AT THE DOOR TODAY.

> TODAY - 5:30 P.M. - CONGREGATION DINNER - THE SENIOR

CHRISTIANS WILL BE HONORED AND THEY ARE EXPECTED TO

BRING NOTHING. THE REST OF THE CONGREGATION PLEASE

BRING ENOUGH TUREENS TO COMPENSATE FOR THE ADDITIONAL.

IF ANY OF THE SENIOR CHRISTIANS NEED A RIDE - PLEASE

CONTACT BILL PFLUGH (285-6837) OR LET US KNOW IN THE

OFFICE. DESSERT AND BEVERAGE WILL BE PROVIDED.

> WE NEED SOME MEN TO HELP SET UP THE TABLES IN THE

UNDERCROFT - RIGHT AFTER THE WORSHIP SERVICE THIS

MORNING.

THURSDAY - 7:30 - CONSTITUTION REVISION COMMITTEE

MEETING.

> HOSPITALIZED: MRS. AMELIA DREHER, DEBORAH MCBRIDE -

MRS. MARY JANE WEISENSTEIN, MRS. SUSAN (PALMER) DRICKER,

BABY GIRL.

> THE SHUT-INS ARE VERY HAPPY WITH THE TAPES FROM THE

SUNDAY SERVICES - AS YOU KNOW A LARGER MACHINE WAS

PURCHASED, SO THAT IT WOULD NOT TAKE AN HOUR TO MAKE

EACH TAPE. IT IS A GREAT ASSET TO OUR CHURCH. SHOULD

YOU WISH TO PLACE A MEMORIAL OR A DONATION TOWARDS

THIS NEW MACHINE - WHAT A TRULY GREAT AND LIVING

MEMORIAL IT COULD BE FOR OUR OWN SHUT-INS.

Again trump sound, Josh call out fam Carmi
His father's fam, his own bros/sis & fams
Achan now terrified prob
& then at last his name called, he stand B4 Josh
Josh said 2 him (vs 19)
So read Achan confess & once again G.U.B.I. had
done its work.
G's Univ. Bur Invest. gotten right man

We read Proverbs 15:3, (read text)
We know this God all-seeing/all-knowing
We may think can do things secretly not found out,
but we only kid selves.

Ad & Eve do this & sin came into world
K. David plot deth Uriah so have Uriah wife,
God found him out.
Jonah sot go against G's plan, & G. found out.
Ananias & Sapphira lied piece prop & found out
much like Achan

In all these instances we see G.U.B.I. at work
Moses cautioned Isites in Num. 32:23,
"Be sure your sin will find you out."

In Rev. 20:12 read: "And the books were opened: and
another book was opened, which is the book of life:
and the dead were judged out of those things which
were written in the books according to their works."

Thus we realize we going answer 4 things we do/say
Think of many modern Xpian much like Achan,
many quiet conscience false belief G. not nearly
as particular as Bible make out 2 be.

How often we can hear peop say, "U don't really
believe G is that partic do U?"
Or say something like, "Well, I realize isn't exact
~~like what I should have said or done accord Bib, but it~~
was such small thing."
Or hear, "Well, it really wasn't an untruth, it
just little white lie."

What tragedy will B some discover our modern ideas
bout big sins/little sins, just as much out harmony
with Word of G, as was Achans idea little theft only
minor thing.

G'S Univ. Bur Invest may know all bout us, but not
st keep in line, it because intense love 4 us
He provided solution 4 our sin thru Christ

More he thot, more donvince must B some 1 else
Some 1 do worse than he.
After all, only trifles & he going use 4 family
Only immediate family knew & they no tell

Had B some 1 else
& so nite prob seem never end,
Finally dawn & camp stir 2 life
Preps made great assembly, peop move 2 & fro
Still, Achan uneasy, "What if some 1 tell?"
While thots disturb him, trump sound long/loud
Peop hurry central area encamp.
Quickly survey sit. & breathe sigh relief 4 there
over 600,000 peop here
How could 1 indiv be single out this crowd?
With this assur Achan took place tribe Judah

But at this pt G.U.B.I. went work
Fame Scot Yd & FBI well known,
but long B B 4 God's Univ. Bureau Investigation
was in operation

1st trige Judah singles out by Josh.
This strange & perhaps Acham's family drew closer
him, look him in fear.

But Achan reassur with, "So what, after all 76M
in tribe Judah. Can't U see imposs task Josh has?
Relax, play it cool."

Even as Achan try reassur fam. trump sound again
Josh call out family Zerah as contain culprit
Zerah? Achan hart must beat faster,
Why this great-grandfather, he himself 1 that fam.
Must quickly look faces aunts/uncles/cousins C
guilty face.
He prob think 1 them did something terrible
& why he/she no confess?

Again trump sound,
Josh call out family of Zabdi,
Why, this own Grandfather, Achan must thot
All eyes turn immed relatives.
Surely some 1 must step 4ward confess.

Little bit Achan taken not bother him,
G not worried over few little trophies he take,
one his relatives done something terrible,
but who could it be?

glance up see Josh stare intently him.
Should he go 4ward confess?
No, couldn't do that, What peop think him?

We told, "If we confess our sin, He is faithful and4/ just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." this I John 1:9,
an in Heb. 7:25 we read,
"Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Thus we assured we need only come 2 Him & accept Him as 1 who redeemed us from our sins,
& we have not only 4giveness of our sins,
but communion with Him each day, as we strive live Xpian life.

"Be sure your sin will find you out," but also be sure that G's Univ. Bur. Invest not willing 1 soul perish.

So He stand ready receive any & all who come 2 Him thru His Son.

Have U done this?

I urge U come 2 Him, cast self upon Him, & ask Him 2 live in your life.

"G.U.B.I."

Text: Proverbs 15:3, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

(Illustration little boy & God watching him)
Perhaps many conjure idea God like this when thin G. all-seeing/all-knowing

4 Scrip red fall Jericho, how Is. took city et all B4 battle warned Josh not take riches/ riches 4 G.
All B burned cept gold/silver/brass/iron,
2B place G's treasury.

All Is. 2 obey rules,
but in 7 chap read man tribe Judah, Achan, felt could disobey G. & not found out

Everything start out so innocently.
Battle Jer. end, all city burned
all things value taken 4 Lord

Now Is could recup from battles, enjoy measure prosp, rest assurance acted accord G's will
Josh send men spy out Ai,
when return tell not need all men 2 conquer

Josh send 3M in battle
men Ai attack Is, kill 36
Unknown Josh & Is. G withdrew favor cause Achan
He steal what should go G's treasury.

Defeat disturb Josh so much we read (vs 6)

Josh cry to G & said, (vss 7-9)

G tell Josh what must B done (vss 10-15)

Now when Achan take beautiful coat styled after Babylon garments, must reasoned self,
"Why let this B burned? What waste. No 1 know here, owner prob ded, shame destroy it."

& next it he find silver worth 200 shekels,
& gold wedge worth 50 shekels.
So take wrap in coat, bury in tent under rug.

Josh issue call peop assemble next AM
If look sit thru eye Achan, lets put selves his place 4 moment.

He herd report some 1 sinned greatly against G.
He also herd person be exposed next AM.
His mind prob ponder quest whether he should go confess or not

Shirley & Ralph Charles Link, Nancy Link, Dale with Lianne his wife, Lloyd Link with Karen his wife
 Jessica in front of Ralph C. Link
 Ethan and Alisha in front of R. Dale and Lianne Link (the eldest son & family)









Ralph C. Link
153 Keck Road
Sarver, Pa. 16055
(412) 352-1103

Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Married: December 15, 1951
Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill
Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

SCHOOLING:

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

PASTORATES:

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United
Church of Christ

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him. A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.